

Testimony of Roderick J. Macdonald

Submitted to the Hawaii Senate, Committee on Government Oversight

The Honorable Laura H. Thielen, Chair

The Honorable Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair

Re: SCR11 REAFFIRMING THE USE OF THE TERM "DEAF-BLIND" BY THE STATE OF HAWAII AND THE COUNTIES.

March 14, 2019, 2:45 pm, Conference Room 225:

Madam Chair, Madam Vice Chair, Members:

I am writing to ask that you SUPPORT passage of SCR11.

I am both Deaf and Blind, and for as long as there has been Federal legislation on the subject my community has been called "Deaf-Blind". Hawaii State statutes use "Deaf-Blind", and so do most organizations serving this population. I served as President of the American Association of the Deaf-Blind, and am currently acting in the position of President of the Hawaii Association of the Deaf-Blind until our new organization can be fully established.

In 1989 a gentleman from Italy circulated a letter in which he proposed removing the hyphen from the name. He argued that this would make it easier to do fundraising - making it clear that "deafblind" is a single disability. For the most part educators of Deaf-Blind children embraced this name change; for the most part Deaf-Blind consumers did not. In 1994 the membership of the AADB voted on the matter: 60% were in favor of keeping the hyphen; 25% said they did not care; and 15% voted to remove the hyphen.

In the late 1990s some local organizations of Deaf-Blind people decided that "DeafBlind" served better. This was largely in parallel to the Deaf community's insistence on capitalizing "Deaf" at all times.

And so it is that today we have three separate spellings in use. Here in Hawaii Deaf-Blind consumers have chosen to go with what they are familiar with - "Deaf-Blind". This is our identity; this is how we refer to ourselves; this is how we prefer others to refer to us.

And yet certain entities - State contractors, to be precise - have been trying to change the spelling to "DeafBlind", without consultation with the Deaf-Blind community. We strongly resist this attempt.

"Deaf-Blind" is who and what we are, and we wish to be respected as such. We ask that you support reaffirming our identity by PASSING SCR11.

Thank you for your support.

Rod Macdonald

SCR-11

Submitted on: 3/13/2019 1:27:40 PM

Testimony for GVO on 3/14/2019 2:45:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Leimomi Khan	Testifying for Democratic Party of Hawaii, Oahu County Cmte, Affirmative Action Committee	Support	No

Comments:

The Affirmative Action Committee of the Oahu County Committee of the Democratic Party of Hawaii supports SCR 11, Reaffirming the Use of the Term “deaf-blind” by the State of Hawaii and the Counties, for all of the reasons stated in the S.C.R. and because this is the preferred term of the deaf-blind community. **We only recommend that the title of the SCR show the term deaf-blind in lower case letters so as to affirm the intent of the resolution.**

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SCR-11

Submitted on: 3/13/2019 8:33:34 PM

Testimony for GVO on 3/14/2019 2:45:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Darlene Ewan	Testifying for Aloha State Association of the Deaf	Support	No

Comments: